



THE
IRISH
PILGRIM,
A POEM.

BY A. O'CONNOR.

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DUBLIN,
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

1851

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THE IRISH PILGRIM.



Fir'd with a noble wish to roam and scan,
The various manners and the works of man,
His course the Pilgrim steers, to Ireland's Eye,
And draws his Landscape towards the southern sky.
He mounts on Gowna's tow'ring hill to stand,
And view his once propitious native Land:
But sad dismay pervades his pensive breast;
And thus his pains in plaintive strains expressed:

"Sun of the dawn! withdraw thy glorious rays,
And spread thy mantle o'er these ruthless days;
When discord sown, the few can trust a Brother;
While thus they maim or mangle one another:
While man 'gainst man with wrath or envy burns;
As if once more the Cadmean age returns;

When Dragons teeth array'd did rise from mud,
 To drench the poignard in fraternal blood.
 Ferocious swarms! why blast the widows wealth?
 And Arab-like by plunder live and stealth.
 With Peter's week why pay the debt of Paul?
 Sure Greenland bears agree with each and all.
 Why, when assail thy guiltless neighbours cot,
 By Rape or incest thus pollute the spot?
 Or make the victims brother, sire or son
 Fall dead beneath the hireling's dirk or gun?
 For these are facts (oh must I shudder too)
 Which ev'ry conscious wretch knows to be true.
 Nor more to dread these hoards (with star and feather)
 Of Irish knaves, who strut in hessian leather,
 Than sanction'd myrmidions, who prowl at night,
 To grasp by craft, what they cannot by right;
 And greas'd, not glutted, like the greedy swine,
 Live on the fat of forfeiture and fine.
 What wonder for such crimes an angry God
 Shou'd pour the vengeance of a martial rod?
 Disease and famine like a deluge come?
 To sweep off guilty millions to the tomb:

Grant Heav'n? O! grant me life but once to see
 Man purg'd of this most fatal malady;
 Infernal malice—cancer of the mind,
 That taints the heart at best to ill inclined.
 Her latent fuel is the life of sin,
 Death in her smiles, and danger in her grin.
 Envy, from malice scarce remov'd a span,
 Scarce known to any, but the breast of man:
 Why swells thy liver, if thy neighbour's fare?
 Or better thrice by persevering care;
 Why growl, if last in fortune's doubtful chace?
 If *out*, why bite your brother dog in place?
 Sure place and pension sometimes are bestown
 On men of real merit and renown—
 If Johnny mows your income down to clay,
 And raise your taxes high as ricks of hay,
 Besott'd fools! it must be for your good:
 Why cut his harness then at Cullen's-wood?
 Why grudge a self instructed sham divine
 On Beef-dé-chasse and nice ragout to dine?
 Tho' lank nimself, a calf of Westly's breed
 May have his fat fanatic piece to feed,

And tho' his efforts might not claim applause,
 It's not for want of lungs nor length of jaws,
 Let Broadrim's indiscretion fill his page;
 And sibly's magic work on doating age—
 Perhaps once more the mystic art is given,
 To steal reanimating fire from heav'n.
 Cease to revile the spaniel curing blain,
 If he the name of Surgeon shou'd profane.
 While warring smuts, scotch bob's venereal post,
 Let Sam the wonders of his Gilead boast.
 Sure all must live the world is wide for all;
 As fish by fish, is man by man to fall?
 Bett ev'n the ballad maid, that screams at noon,
 Has natures cravings, well as Billington;
 And chieftains of few sorry months campaign
 Have rank and pomp and splendour to maintain;
 Well as the champions who may proudly boast,
 For Tippo's wealth they swept the Indian coast.

While various sources various wills propose,
 Pride is a common source of human woes:

This scornful fiend of high rebellious birth,
 Conceiv'd in sin, and then condemn'd to Earth,
 The traces of her origin reveals,
 In upstarts mazards, and in peacocks tails.
 Nor resting there but soaring vastly higher,
 Sets King's at loggerheads and states on fire :
 Makes Sultan's believe, (tho' life is but a span
 They're beings superior far to mortal man,
 But sad to see (what forms our chief complaints)
 To many sultans in this Isle of saints ;
 Many among the fairer sex to find,
 To this unhallowed phantom much inclin'd.
 Prudilla fair, and one might say demure,
 Can't quit those airs, which sense can't well endure ;
 In dumps she sees a larger brilliant deck
 The graceful charms of Clementina's neck ;
 Priscilla bursts to find Amelia's torch
 Retard her foot-man at a pallace porch ;
 On flies in wrath, her sober chum to rouze,
 And for her whim, a limb to make him lose :
 But shou'd Flirtilla meet a finer dress,
 Set down a piece for Doctors common press.

Religious zeal, in ev'ry age and clime,
 Is made a wig block to dress ev'ry crime;
 A mask for malice, a pretext for sin,
 And for Teditlon proves the surest gin
 What means the cry against emancipation?
 But mere monopoly in speculation;
 Or what is Church ascendancy at best?
 But interesting bigotry rehears'd.
 The yell is raised with hypocritic view,
 To keep the marrow-bones among the few.
 So sturdy beggars hast'ning to a feast,
 Wou'd fain exclude their brothers from a taste
 This selfish act the host could not abide,
 And to themselves in turn his boons denied,
 The truth is this, that he who injures most,
 Has least religion, or reward to boast.
 One class resents to see the silk-worm cope
 Revile his grandsire's pastor and the Pope:
 Another rails at button-scraping sall,
 And calls him brazen persecuting Paul:
 While Sall in turn swears by his sober ass,
 He'll make the christian world abjure the mass?

Thus for exclusive happiness they fight,
 As punks for pattins, or the blind for light.
 Full wide is heav'n, and go which way you will,
 Thro' Strand-street, Patrick's, or thro' Lazor's-hill ;
 No waiting angel asks .who shew'd the way,
 But why so obstinate, so long astray ?
 No seraph there sneers at thy mean approach
 Thy want of tinsel'd robe, or varnish'd coach ;
 Nor fools, nor ware-room, will he investigate,
 If thy salvation job be found compleat.

Let haughty states engage in peace or war,
 Fill well that place which chance reserv'd you for ;
 But shun the broils (if ease you love in life)
 Of church and state, as those of man and wife,
 One day lets fly the tomahawk or spear ;
 Another seats them down to cordial cheer ;
 A truce the former sign, where thousands bled,
 The latter settle their disputes in bed ;
 Fool then art thou, without a bed or field,
 A precious life for their caprice to yield.
 B.

Whatever Kings or Ministers do reave,
 It's silly subjects that must fill the grave.
 In Spain and Portugal, what numbers died;
 For having their dark fristy faith denied.
 In York and Lancaster how many bled
 To stick a feather on a shool-boy's head;
 And many a hero in Marengo sown,
 To keep an idol on a German throne.

Ten years two nations war'd to reconcile
 Each to the worship of a crocodile '
 And yet, could one with less than sparrows brains,
 Not prove them asses for their savage pains.
 The Jews did once a golden calf adore,
 The Arabs having not such precious ore,
 For worship kept a monstrous log of wood
 And offer'd spices for its daily food:
 Had one thro' fun the clumsy mass revil'd
 Death was his doom; if not to be exil'd.
 Some Irish still the idolatry retain,
 Adore a brazen horse without a Rein,

With ribbons yearly drest, to look the prouder,
 And feed the brute, instead of hay, with powder
 A sturdy bruiser on his back they place,
 Hail glorious emblem of their own disgrace !
 And shou'd a wag besmut his Roman nose,
 Or life, or liberty he's sure to lose.

Count ev'ry individual down from Eve,
 Concordant features no two faces give ;
 Primæval wisdom caught the ingenious plan,
 To save distinction between man and man ;
 And prove that ev'n without a general bent,
 Man for a mixt society was meant.
 Much as we differ in extent and size,
 More different modes of thought excite surprise ;
 One truth we know, nor can that be denied,
 Men's thoughts and wishes are diversified ;
 Opinions differ, as the day from night,
 And wide, as stiff-necked wrong recedes from right.
 But what the purpose, what the great design,
 What cause, conjecture can define ?

Mine let me hazard then, in humble rhyme,
Weak is the talent, but the task sublime.

All men intended for a social life,
Come here as Pilgrims to encounter strife,
And merely inert animals wou'd prove,
If passions did not their exertions move.
Since nought created was, without its use,
Perhaps the worst of passions bear excuse :
Thus Nero's cruelty, and Tarquin's pride
For harsh dominion save a faithful guide :
Thus Helen's faithless and degrading flight
On chaste Lucretia throws a fairer light :
And Celia's passion for Vauxhall or dress,
Makes Jonas his own homely wife caress :
If vixen Moll had not been on the town,
Melinda's meekness scarce cou'd have been known,
If there was not a snug, concerted miser,
The profligate would never become wiser :
And had we neither profligate nor rake,
What figure prudence, or cou'd virtue make.

Virtue again, oh! let me sound thy name,
 And thee of all perfections chief proclaim;
 In peace or war, in misery or health,
 Be thou my mirror, comforter and wealth,
 Sure, to restrain the force of youthful rage,
 And ripen infant innocence to age;
 Let billows threaten, or let storms distort,
 Safe shall thy bark have reach'd her destin'd port,
 Let wanton worlds to self destruction run,
 Thou rising radiant, like the morning sun,
 May'st safe recline, secure from fell surprise,
 From midnight robbers, and from noon day spies,
 From treason, danger, and from debt secure,
 No squinting bailiff lurks behind thy door,
 No half-starv'd peasant ever shall deplore,
 That thou hast sold his sweat for coach and four.
 St. George's Compter, or Kilmainham noose
 Might check a passion for the heath or stews,
 The ghost of vice might some perhaps deter,
 And some from prudence merely cease to err;
 But say what merit can the mortal claim,
 Who had not thee, fair Virtue for his aim.

But to return—some object must be sought,
 By this diversity in human thought.
 Obscur'd in night might lie some glorious ray,
 If jarring systems brought it not to day :
 Long might the sun unnoticed chance to lie,
 But once eclips'd is sure to catch the eye ;
 And thus the All-wise and mighty God in glory,
 Thro' various clouds of darkness bursts before ye.
 Nature to accomplish man, each for his station,
 To rule his useful passions gave him reason,
 When this is filter'd thro' untutor'd brains,
 Nought but discordant dregs to sense remains,
 And these deliver'd with a pulpit rage,
 Or th' interjections of a novel page,
 Give birth to error, and to noisy prate,
 And all the nonsense of an empty pate ;
 For wrong ideas are conceiv'd for right,
 So shatter'd mirrors tantalize the sight.

Since nature then implants in ev'ry breast,
 The palm of self-conviction for its pest,

Why clown despise, or mock the fop; whose skull
 Is not so clear as yours, nor quite so full?
 Why hate the Hindoo Indian, Turk or Jew?
 Each has his god, and loves him well as you:
 Why Christian hate; if to the heav'nly throne
 He goes with any pasport, but your own?
 Black-whisker'd Will as well might rail at Ned,
 Because he's Edward, and his beard is red:
 Or clumsy Susan spun at slender rose,
 Because she's thin and wears a shorter nose.
 A grander cant, or turkey-cock, abide
 A lighter colour to approach his side;
 Man, more absurd than either swells with spleen,
 To see the orange or the clover green;
 And thus a life by factious zeal degrades,
 As if religion did consist in shades.
 Zeal, cherish'd in a just and noble cause,
 Must claim the merit of unfeign'd applause;
 But stretch'd beyond the bounds of church or state,
 Excites the rancour of revenge or hate.

Short is the sight, that cannot well behold
The aim of faction is the glare of gold.
Nor sees there can no worship be divine,
Which lays the heart not at th' Almighty's shrine :
Distinctions are the pranks of time and place,
But mercy's boundless, and eternal grace.

But hark, what tumult, what a horrid scene?
On yonder rising hill or hallow'd green.
Red from the lash, or from the picket wan,
See patience prove a savage race of man.
That little urchin see ; with ferret's eyes,
Tho' pale as lead, still callous to their cries.
Behold the Gospel preacher take the field,
Nor meet the crowd in surplus, but in shield ;
Transmit the mortal Pilgrim to the Kirk,
Not with the solemn dirge, but silent dirk.
Say friendly Brahmin, wou'd you thus disgrace
The sacred function of the prince of peace ?
Say, wou'd you see a human victim die,
You, whose kind heart cou'd not torment a fly.

With genial meekness wou'd you not afford
The healing counsel for the wounding sword?
Then christian prelate sway the sable crape,
And not the terrors of a scarlet cape.
Man's perverse mind, like over-heated yest,
A method claims, not force, to be comprest:
Vain then th' attempt, meliorate the will,
By Green-street clangs, or pangs of Arbour-hill.
Absurd to think the Almighty's wrath appeas'd,
By altars fell for human victims rais'd.
Dykes full of corps, or heaps of orange prove
New insults to the attribute of love.
The glorious majesty of God disdains
An incense, which the assassins hand profanes:
In man, his image, weltering all in gore,
He feels essentially the impious sore.

How small the sacrifice, how easy too,
Does Heav'n benign, poor man! require of you,
Not mangl'd body's offer'd up in sin,
Nor Houses burnt, with all that are therein;
C,

But hearts, attach'd to glorious God above,
On earth, to men good will, and peace and love.
With true contentment shou'd you wish to glow,
Why not endeavour to make others so?
Thine, with thy neighbours happiness combin'd
Augments the pleasures of a virtuous mind,
Besides one act, benevolently done,
Disarms resentment, at sweet mercy's throne:
Be then the object of thy conduct this,
Thy neighbours comforts and thy neighbours bliss:
Shou'd pur-blind zeal, forsake this sacred rule,
Pronounce her either, hypocrite or fool.
Meek, kind, and generous shou'd that creature be,
Whose will was made by his Creator free.

Your social bonds one gleaming vice distracts,
A vile mistatement of egregious facts:
Say, vain recorders of rebellion say,
Whose shameless annals swell for paltry pry,
Which from corruption or from malice rise
These horrid habits of compounding lies,

Or by the impulse of that imp of hell,
 By whose intrigues our parent Adam fell.
 The cause of lies five only things proclaim,
 Fear, int'rest, malice, vanity, or shame :
 The former two are deem'd to be accurst,
 But hireling lyar's are of all the worst.
 What face of brass then must that grave mouse show,
 To meet his doom aloft or down below.
 Falsehood is found, and flattery is known,
 The two worst foes that hover round a throne ;
 The one will praise when she has faults to find,
 And calm the scruples of the royal mind :
 The other agitates the vulgar flood
 And laves a leaven in the coldest blood ;
 Till this at first without a guilty thought,
 Is driv'n to realize the impuls'd fault ;
 Too oft the harmless hare ever run aground,
 Retorts, and breathless bites the wounding hound.

Foul blood, we may from slavour'd tongue presume,
 Of cancer'd hearts, aspersion is the the spume ;

Then mordant wretch! let go th' envenom'd tooth,
 And heal the ulcer with the balm of truth,
 Truth, the most perfect character of man,
 (For truth and deity are consider'd one)
 Bids malice shriek and slander shrug for shame,
 While she supports benevolence and fame,
 Hail thou serene and sweet benevolence!
 Twin cordial sister of kind providence,
 If aught a claim has on propitious Heav'n,
 To thee benevolence it must be giv'n.
 To thee the guilty swain oft owes his life,
 The bard his patron, and the rake his wife;
 On dreary coasts the sailor thrown, depends
 On thee, for shelter and for savage friends;
 And oft the hero, from his grandeur cast,
 Thy gracious favours supplicates at last.
 No crime to thee, tho' errors oft ascribed,
 Peace with thy sap, and charity's imbib'd;

In days of yore, our natives counted wild,
 Were oft as such, by foreigners revild,

At various times, came various cockney skulls,
 To see our wild men's tails, and hirish bulls—
 But those as often met the fate of twiss,
 For Pat could always make a Saxon p-ss,
 Hence spread his fame, so great beyond the water,
 The husbands dread, the darling of the daughter.
 Dislike or envy, ignorance or guile,
 Promoted this false prejudice a while :
 But whence the farce ungrateful Deamon, say,
 Two state commedians of the present day,
 In Ireland's bosom foster'd, rear'd and fed,
 Shou'd in the british senate-house have said
 You're all (alas what rancour's in the words)
 A set of scoundrels, and barbarian hoards
 What soft reply can injur'd honour give,
 Let those who feel for others, well conceive ;
 Let not resentment bend the angry brow,
 But say what cool reflection must avoid:
 If palsy'd power, or mildew'd merit roam,
 Or thread-bare influence ill receiv'd at home,
 Or fawning flattery—to rebuild their fame
 Upon the ground-work of their mother's shame,

Brittania well, and well may say with scorn,
For want of tail they wear the hoof and horn.

What various forms proclaim celestial she,
Whether, disorder, deluge, danger, death or fire.
Still one unerring truth we are sure to find,
That oft resentment she retails in kind.
Hence meer casuits clearly understand,
What, eye for eye ; what, tooth for tooth demand.
Herod to worms who squads of infants gave,
To worms in turn, became a living grave ;
And Clieve expiring fancied famish'd blacks
For rice around him scream'd with empty sack,
If Sultan Mamoud nails Abdala's ears,
His own are sure to fall beneath the shears ;
And rampant cats, shou'd Jack set out to tame,
A stumbling nag for him will do the same.

But why my thoughts on trivial objects roam,
While such disasters do prevail at home ;

On Leinster, what dismal gloom is cast,
See George's channel lie without a mast,
See engines of destruction on the flood,
Where mansions for humane reception stood.
While hundreds revel at a masquerade,
See thousands gasp at home for want of bread
Ebland see, once splendid, fair and wide,
Once threatening to approach the water side,
Big with the fruits of industry and peace,
The future glory of the rising race ;
The change how sudden—soon the grandeur falls,
Behold her ragged roofs and rusty walls ;
Her walks, the brilliant pride of female dress,
Infested now with mendicant distress ;
The vaults, intended for her rising domes,
Now dens for robbers and for beggars homes ;
Her streets to rise, her chimnies cease to smok,
Of owl too soon, the residence, or rook ;
Her windows, once resplendent, all in ruins,
Now hung with Hayrehacks and pantaloons,
Or stuff'd with tatter'd petticoat or quilt,
To hide the crimes of coiner, knave, or jilt ;

See yonder dome, the boast of lenient laws;
Tho' always echoing the shrewd sisters cause;
Where no's and nods, in bundles stood for sale;
Like weeds and willows, rustling in a gale:
There England highly season'd Irish salt,
And precious ore extract from musty malt;
There rags receiv'd, to save a sinking nation;
The magic stamp of transubstantiation,
And oft was their state simony devis'd,
Well mult'd were short heads to be re-baptiz'd.
To shift the sceue for honesty and sense,
We'll trace the champions of this dome's defence;
There once a maiden racer (strange to hear)
Lost forty-hundred sterling pounds a year.
While founder'd nags without energetic force,
Some thousands won, by limping over the course.
There once Sir John, in honesty's behalf,
Renounc'd the worship of the golden calf:
And there O'Donnell taught the tear of woe,
On Eria's last expiring gasp to flow:
As vapours from the pregnant Earth arise,
And by their union burst in warmer skies,

So patriot feeling and paternal care
 Exhal'd, and vanish'd in imperial air;
 The cloud condens'd to tear the Realm asunder,
 Discordant atoms scorn'd to urge the thunder.
 No Grattan there, no Ponsoby nor Goold,
 In manly strains the Nations claims t' unfo'd :
 Fair freedoms gift no Plunket there display's,
 No Curran cuts no Barrington inveighs :
 No Moira brave, dispassionate and wise,
 Dispells the golden mist from placemens eyes.

Devot'd walls one consolation left,
 Of those unshaken pillars now bereft :
 For spleen no longer swells the crimson sack,
 Where Cats were doom'd to feel the knife of Jack ;
 No pamper'd Priest of Mammon there enslaves
 Three Millions of his kindred Fools and Knaves ;
 Wealth Levi's tribe adoers, then by that rule,
 In mitre can be found both Knave and Fool.
 To Prelates Heav'n assign'd the task to nod,
 Not in the Senate but the house of God ;
 D.

In pulpits, not in parliaments to shine,
Nor in the flesh forget the true divine.

The swain elop'd what shall we now contrive,
What useful purpose for th' abandon'd hive
'Twill make, says Bill, since all our gold is spent,
A fine distillery for paper ment :

'Twill make says Curran (while he slowly trots)

A finer breeding cage for Troopers Brats.

Then shall our porches ring with Hawkers cries,

Bawds blasting bodies, Soldiers damning eyes.

Artists might here find ample room to sport

The panorama of some batter'd fort :

Give breast views of such learning dames in plate,

As feel a relish for the marriage state ;

On canvas hang the heads of tragic play'rs,

And shew the spectres of departed Martyrs.

Nor cou'd in more conspicuous view be plac'd

A common Council at a Sheriffs feast,

Where paunch'd rising prove that corporation

Is a term deriv'd from capers eat in reason;

Round flies the sack, and, round the rino toast ;
 Huzza Grand Jury cess and Gangate Poast !!!
 Cou'd fancy believe, that such a noble dome
 Ev'n at the worst of times, cou'd ev'r become
 A pompous Office for a peevish Judge,
 To suffer neither PRO nor CON to budge ;
 To hold a pious conclave, to dispose
 Of Minors Rackets, and of dead Mens sho's
 And with a stern and supercilious air
 Dame Justice from her modest claims to stare,
 So fly the Sparrows from the hollow'd oaks
 Or Towers desert'd, when a Raven croaks ;

A primate sure must find his Talents weak,
 Who wou'd the Brainbox of Pandora take
 For sifting records long before the flood,
 To prove that fleecing is for human good ;
 Too frail is avarice, too fatal pride,
 To take the one or th' other for a guide,
 A guide that spurns at Peter's meagre dish
 But licks his lips at Martin's loaf and fish ;

And if the Table was upset is sure
 To cranch the remnant crag behind the door.
 At Papist's rail with this implicit hope,
 That they, one day thro' fear might make him Pope,
 And spurns at Pontiff's thus to please his primate,
 To Cæsar's favour was the game of Pilate.

But now the Evening closed the sinking day ;
 In thought exhaust'd down the Pilgrim lay,
 Invok'd his God,—Invok'd the very Stars,
 To put an end to those infernal Wars.
 Fain wou'd he venture farther from the shore,
 Which gave him birth, and peace and ease before ;
 But here he shrunk, here did his courage fail,
 Least scenes more horrid shou'd his sense assail
 Tho' three years only absent, knew no friend ;
 The friendly neighbour dare not pity lend :
 His sister stood, so did his brother nigh ;
 And yet their squall'd looks deceived his eye ;
 Around he turns, to see the winding road,
 Which oft led strangers to his warm abode ;

In vain he sought the beech beside the pool,
 Where once he learned more than he cou'd at school:
 Nor found the vestige of the spreading oak,
 Where maids oft' met for ev'ning mirth or joke,
 But rif'd Walls, from smoaking cinders rise,
 To vomit Clouds of Darkness to the Skies;
 Devouring flames and desolating Bands,
 To purge these once reputed holy Lands,
 Of frantic zeal, to give the greater proof,
 The House of Worship, and the Curate's Roof,
 And Beggar's Hut, all jumbld in the flame
 Impress the stamp of horror and of shame,
 Nor Priest's abode escap's the avenging Rod,
 Because he prays in Latin to his God;
 Nor Bishop's Palace screen'd from frenzi'd wrath;
 Because he's counted fond of viper broth;
 Thus evils spring from causes more minute,
 Like Bloody blows, from whimsical dispute,
 But ah! how sad to hear the Orphan moan;
 "Mama! Mama! this Cottage was our own!"
 The sight no longer cou'd the sage abide,
 He gave his Blessing to mankind and died.

FINIS

On Time.

- " Say is there ought that can convey
- " An image of its transient stay!
- " 'Tis an hand's breath, 'tis a tale,
- " 'Tis a vessel under sail,
- " 'Tis a courier's straining steed,
- " 'Tis a shuttle in its speed,
- " 'Tis an eagle in its way,
- " Darting down upon its prey,
- " 'Tis an arrow in its flight,
- " Mocking the pursuing sight,
- " 'Tis a vapour in the air,
- " 'Tis a whirlwind rushing there,
- " 'Tis a short-liv'd fading flower,
- " 'Tis a rainbow on a shower,
- " 'Tis a momentary ray,
- " Smiling on a winter's day,
- " 'Tis a torrents rapid stream,
- " 'Tis a shadow, its a dream,
- " 'Tis the closing watch of night,
- " Dying at the rising light,
- " 'Tis a lancesbape vainly gay,
- " Painted upon crumbling clay,
- " 'Tis a lamp that wastes its fires,
- " 'Tis a smoke that quick expires,
- " 'Tis a bubble its a sigh,
- " Be prepared O! Man to die !"

